

REMARKS

Claims 27, 31 and 32 have been amended. Claims 1-24 and 33-35 have been canceled.

The Examiner has objected to claims 32-35 as having certain informalities. Claims 34-35 have also been rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. Claims 33-35 have been deleted, thereby obviating this objection and rejection with respect to these claims.

Additionally, claim 32 has been amended to change the terminology “code for” to --code to--, as suggested by the Examiner. The objection of claim 32 as informal has thus been overcome.

The Examiner has rejected applicants’ claim 32 under 35 USC § 101 as directed to non-statutory subject matter. The Examiner has argued that the claim merely recites a number of computing steps and that the language “program for” recites only intended use.

In order to overcome this rejection, applicants have amended the preamble of claim 32 to recite “A program executed on a computer to perform an information processing method”, as suggested by the Examiner. This rejection has thus been satisfied.

The Examiner has rejected applicants’ claims 27-35 under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by the Lindh publication (U. S. Pub. No. 2002/0022974). Applicants have amended applicants’ independent claims 27, 31 and 32 and, with respect to such claims, as amended, and their respective dependent claims, the Examiner’s rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants’ independent claims 27, 31 and 32 have been amended to better define applicants’ invention. More particularly, applicants’ amended independent claim 27 recites an information processing apparatus, comprising: accumulation means for accumulating

information about a related prior art document which is cited in a prosecution of a patent application in a first country and a related prior art document cited in another prosecution of a counterpart patent application in a second country different from the first country; and display control means for displaying a list of the actual document numbers of the related prior art documents cited in each of the prosecutions of the patent application together with the actual reference number of the patent application to be prosecuted. Claims 31 and 32 have been similarly amended. Such a construction is not taught or suggested by the cited art of record.

In contrast, FIG.7 of the Lindh publication shows that documents cited in plural countries are collected up and displayed in the form of statistical numbers of citing and cited patents. Neither FIG. 7 of the Lindh publication nor the passages of the Lindh publication cited by the Examiner, however, teach or suggest the display of a list of the actual document numbers of the related prior art documents cited in each of the prosecutions of the patent application together with the actual reference number of the patent application to be prosecuted.

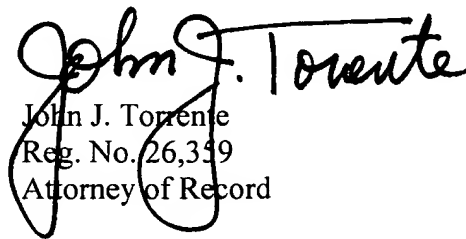
Applicants' independent claims 27, 31 and 32, and their respective dependent claims, all of which recite such features, thus patentably distinguish over the Lindh publication.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicants' claims, as amended, patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

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